

What is claimed is:

1. A method of testing a network device, the method comprising:  
sending control information from a tester to the network device via a media independent interface (MII) at a data rate greater than 2.5 Mb/sec; and  
using the control information to write to and/or read from registers of the test device.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the sending the control information includes sending the information at at least 10 Mb/sec.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the sending the control information includes sending the information at at least 100 Mb/sec.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the sending information includes sending the information via a data bus of the of the MII.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the sending the information via the data bus includes sending the information in frames.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein the frames each include a preamble, a start frame delimiter, the control information, and an end frame delimiter.
7. The method of claim 5, wherein the frames include an identifier, and wherein the using the information includes identifies identifying the frames in the network device.
8. The method of claim 5, wherein the using the information includes extracting the control information from the frames in the network device.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the sending the information via the data bus includes sending the information via at least four pins of the data bus.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the sending the information via the data bus includes sending the information in nibbles of at least four bits.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the control information includes information in the form of register addresses and register contents.

12. A method of testing a network device, the method comprising:  
passing information between a test device and the network device via one or more data buses of a media independent interface (MII); and  
using control information passed from the tester to the network device to perform operations in the network device.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the operations include writing to and reading from memory registers of the network device.

14. The method of claim 12, further comprising evaluating the network device using the information from the network device passed to the tester.

15. The method of claim 12, wherein the passing the information includes passing information along at least four pins of the MII.

16. The method of claim 12, wherein the passing the information includes passing the information at a rate of greater than 2.5 Mb/sec.

17. The method of claim 12, wherein the sending information includes sending the information at at least 10 Mb/sec.

18. The method of claim 12, wherein the sending information includes sending the information at at least 100 Mb/sec.

19. The method of claim 12, wherein the passing the information includes passing the information in nibbles of at least four bits.

20. The method of claim 12, further comprising placing the network device in a test mode prior to passing the control information to the network device.

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